

EUROPEAN ELECTIONS 2014



NO TO THIS EU

1. SUPERSTATE NO, COOPERATION YES

Are you unwilling any longer to charge headlong towards an ever more powerful European Superstate? Do you want from now on to have the last word when it comes to what we in our own country decide and not leave it to Brussels' meddling? Do you want to cooperate when cooperation is useful, but keep control of everything that we can better regulate for ourselves? Then you must decide who will best make your voice heard in Europe.

The existing European Union is controlled by big corporations and big countries, whose interests far too often come before our own. We want to decide for ourselves how we work together in Europe. We don't want Brussels any longer to run our society. We can best determine for ourselves how our labour market operates, or our health care, our education, our pensions, our social housing, our public transport and our budget.

European cooperation is a fine goal: to preserve the peace, promote wellbeing and protect democratic and social rights. But it is the Europhiles who threaten to undermine these goals. In this election manifesto we explain how we can take back the reins in our own country – by cooperating with others where useful, but at the same time distancing ourselves from the European Superstate.

The Brussels Sacrificial Stone

Europe is going through a crisis, not only an economic crisis but a political crisis too. In the Netherlands, many refuse to accept that so many political parties say that they don't want to see more powers transferred to Brussels, but in the last few years have allowed this to happen. The SP agrees with these people. European Economic Governance (EEG) gives the European Commission the right to interfere across the board, in matters where, prior to the crisis, they were not allowed to meddle: pensions, housing, social security and education.

The banking crisis that has held Europe in its grip since 2008 is no natural phenomenon, but the direct consequence of the neoliberal policies that have characterised the European Union since the 1990s. The systematic weakening of bank surveillance has meant that financial institutions have been able to take risks, and of course that will eventually go awry. Member states were forced to go to the aid of banks and finance houses, transforming the banking crisis into a crisis of debt and leading more and more countries into difficulties. The eurozone is just as unbalanced as when the euro was first introduced, despite all of the powers transferred to Brussels. The only question is whether the euro in its present form can survive.

The harsh reality is that millions of people are out of work. According to the International Red Cross 43 million men, women and children in the European Union do not get enough to eat and 120 million run the risk of falling into poverty. For all the talk of recovery, the fact is that for ordinary people the crisis is getting ever worse.

We are keen to work together in Europe, but not to offer up our democracy and our welfare state on the sacrificial stone of Brussels. The survival of the euro and the short-sighted economic interests of big corporations, banks and investors must no longer come first in Europe. Instead priority must be given to the democratic and social interests of the citizens of all of the EU's member states.

A province of superstate Europe

Our country has suffered from neoliberal policies imposed by Brussels, with its 3% limit on budget deficits and 60% ceiling on sovereign debt, a budgetary fetishism which across Europe has only led to lower economic growth and in many countries to year-on-year recession, with falling purchasing power, growing unemployment and increasing poverty as their results.

The Netherlands has been the star pupil in the Brussels class as successive governments cut spending in an irresponsible fashion and transferred more powers to Brussels, including ever stricter budgetary control. In this way the Netherlands threatens to become no more than a province of Superstate Europe that lacks transparency and democracy and fuels antagonisms among people and between countries. We want to be a reliable partner to all who are willing to cooperate, but not to sacrifice the essential values of our society.

You can have your say

On May 22nd the Dutch people will have the chance to say how they wish Europe to develop when we elect our Members of the European Parliament, a parliament which has a say in a range of important issues: how much money should go to the EU, and how it should be spent; how can we ensure that it isn't frittered away; which European laws must we adhere to? All matters which involve our fundamental values of human dignity, equality and solidarity. Proposals which contribute to a fairer distribution of wealth and wellbeing and the defence of human rights will enjoy our support, while those which do the opposite can expect our resistance. The more votes we get in these European elections, the better we can let your voice be heard in Europe.

2. DEMOCRACY

Following the horrors of the Second World War former enemies began to work together to preserve the peace, promote prosperity and defend democratic and social rights. Cooperation was initially a success, but things have changed. The European Union is growing ever bigger and more powerful and has become a threat to our democratic and social rights. The public has an ever-decreasing voice in decision-making, which is dominated by major corporations and big states.

The transfer of powers to Brussels, which has had the support of successive governments, began in 1992 with the Maastricht Treaty and has continued with the treaties of Amsterdam, Nice and Lisbon. Most political parties in our country find this a positive development. We do not.

Recently we have also seen the establishment of European Economic Governance, which transfers budgetary powers from our own parliament to the European Commission. A vote for the SP on May 22nd will be a vote against this process.

- We want neither a European Superstate nor a European government. Instead of a dominant, ideological European Commission we want a body which will carry out tasks given to it by the member states. This would also mean a drastic reduction in the Brussels bureaucracy. Until this happens, we want to see the European Parliament having the right to sack individual Commissioners.
- Qualified Majority Voting (QMV) has been extended to more and more areas with each successive treaty, effectively abolishing national vetoes in those areas and undermining the powers of national parliaments. We want to see this trend halted and a return to more intergovernmental working.
- The functioning of the European Parliament (EP) must be improved. We reject the transfer of powers from national parliaments to the EP, but an EP which enhances democracy by acting as a monitor on the European Commission and the Council of Ministers we would welcome. Before a Dutch minister can agree to fresh European legislation, he or she must have the express support of Parliament. Cooperation between national parliaments must be improved, and each should have the right to produce a 'red card', restraining the EU institutions and forbidding European legislation in a specific policy area.
- EU bureaucracy must be reduced and the flow of new legislation slowed. The Commission should no longer have the right to initiate legislation, which properly belongs with the member states. The number of EU officials should be gradually reduced, and more national officials posted temporarily to Brussels. Salaries of EU officials must be reduced.
- If you count in all of their allowances, Euro-MPs can take home €10-15,000 per month. They are not obliged to produce receipts when claiming expenses. This is absurd. Salaries should be greatly reduced and expenses should be repaid on the basis of actual costs. European Commissioners' salaries, which presently amount to €20- to 25,000 per month, must also be hugely reduced.
- We want a single meeting place for the EP: Brussels. Meeting in Strasbourg costs an additional €200 million p.a.
- The power of Brussels lobbyists must be reined in. Their numbers are estimated at 25,000. Registration must be made compulsory, including declaration of on whose behalf they are working, how much is being spent on their services, and which officials or Members they are meeting with.
- The Commission has established some thousand 'expert groups' whose function is to give advice on EU legislation. Removing the Commission's right of initiative would make most of

these groups redundant, but while they continue they should be much more balanced in their membership, which is currently dominated by representatives of big business. Smaller firms, NGOs and trade unions should all be represented.

- EU policies and the decision-making which leads to them must be transparent.
- Whistle-blowers must be protected. Abuses should not be covered up, the people that expose them should not be persecuted. If from outside the EU, they should be offered political asylum where necessary.

3. CRISIS, BUDGET AND EURO

The economic crisis has hit the twenty-eight countries of the European Union hard. The EU turned out in its present form to be unable to protect us from this crisis; instead, member states were forced to give free play to finance capital. Stock exchanges, banks, investors and speculators have far too great a say in Brussels decision-making.

The irresponsible introduction of the euro contributed to the crisis, while austerity policies have also made matters worse, cutbacks everywhere preventing sustainable growth. The public got reduced services, fewer rights and heavier burdens, paying for a crisis brought about by finance capital given free rein by the EU.

The current crisis is being misused to accelerate the drive towards a European federation in which member states will be increasingly subordinated to Brussels. A vote for the SP on 22nd May will help to defend national sovereignty and promote a more social Europe.

- The Stability and Growth Pact must be dropped. The damaging spending cuts which are a result of its one-sided focus lead instead to instability and shrinkage, falling purchasing power, declining demand, mass unemployment and widespread unrest.
- Austerity damages not only the economy of the country on which it is imposed, but that of other member states. Agreements should be reached as to how together we can revive employment. More room should therefore be given for countries to invest in ways which will contribute to improving demand and reducing joblessness.
- The 60% limit on sovereign debt has been overtaken by events and must be seen in the context of a state's property, which would prevent the privatization of state assets being used to balance the books. Reducing private debts should be the priority.
- There should be no separate budget for the eurozone; every country should retain responsibility for its own budget and not be made to stand guarantor for other states' debts.
- Countries which can't pay their debts are not helped by being given further loans. Instead, debts should be restructured to recognize that the lenders are also responsible and should take losses when a country can't repay. Support should go to the people of a country and not to banks.
- For nineteen years in succession the European Court of Auditors has refused to approve the EU annual accounts, principally because of incorrect use of moneys by the member states. This must be stopped: all member states should be obliged to present annual accounts laying out how they have spent EU moneys. Irregularities should entail repayment by the country responsible.
- The Commission's anti-fraud service OLAF must be improved.
- EU funds should be exclusively aimed at the poorest member states. The Common Agricultural Policy must be drastically reformed, the budget reduced and directed towards sustainable agriculture. The budget should continue to be found from direct payments by the member states. There should be no EU taxes.

The Euro

The SP has been against the euro from the very start. We understood that a currency union would lead immediately to a further transfer of sovereignty. Yet despite the huge economic, social and cultural differences between the various member states and in the face of popular

opposition, the single currency was introduced and countries lost any ability to control their own monetary policy.

This has brought enormous problems. Leaving the euro would be an expensive and uncertain step, yet continuing the existing policy is a dead end. We must be prepared with measures which would offer a soft landing in the event of a collapse of the euro. The attitude that the euro must be preserved at all costs should be shelved, and alternatives considered; no further member states should be admitted to the eurozone, which in its present form is unsustainable; movements of capital should be subject to monitoring and control; irresponsible speculation must be addressed to prevent further bubbles in the economy, and surveillance of the markets ensured so that the financial sector serves the real economy and society as a whole, rather than, as now, the other way round.

4. FINANCIAL MARKETS AND TAXATION

In the European Union in recent decades the financial sector has been increasingly freed of regulation. Limits on the international movement of capital have been lifted. When the financial casino and the European Union collapsed into each other in 2008, banks were saved, while the people were forced to pay.

Policymakers and those responsible for supervision have identified so strongly with the financial sector that they have lost sight of the public interest. A vote for the SP on May 22nd will help to put finance capital under strict restraint, tackle the cheats, protect workers and small businesses and create jobs.

- Banks and insurers must be restricted in size, and countries should have the right to protect their banks from undesirable takeovers.
- Rules must be stricter and supervision tighter. Agreements must be made to prevent conflicts of interests involving accountancy firms and credit rating agencies, which should have to be licensed, the licence to be taken off them if they fail to follow agreed procedures.
- We reject the proposal to make all banks in the EU responsible for each other's debts via a 'resolution fund'. The rescue of a bank should be wholly funded by its shareholders and other providers of capital. Where losses are so great that the intervention of the state is required, all necessary costs should be met by the financial sector in the member state concerned.
- Solidarity between countries does not mean that we must stand guarantor for each other's banks.
- Savings and business banks should be separate so that banks can no longer gamble with their clients' savings. Bonuses paid to bankers should be abolished as these encourage risk-taking.
- European and international capital movements must be subject to restrictions. A financial transaction tax should be instituted. Speculation in foodstuffs and state bonds must be addressed via an anti-speculation plan, as should all forms of speculation which disrupt the economy. Insider trading and market manipulation must be severely punished.

Tax evasion and tax avoidance

European countries are competing over fiscal advantages for multinationals. Lost tax revenues must be made up by ordinary taxpayers and small firms. Agreements must be made putting an end to this.

- The race to the bottom should be halted by agreeing within the EU a minimum rate and minimum basis for corporation tax.
- Companies should be obliged to list in their annual reports how much tax they pay in each country in which they are active.
- No further agreements should be signed with tax haven countries. An end must be put to the common practice under which multinationals sign agreements with these countries behind closed doors.

5. WORK AND INCOME

The neoliberal policies supported by most political parties have led to the European Union becoming simply a market, in which the strongest rule and solidarity is undermined. This has led in turn to low wages, weakened trade unions and large-scale destruction of social rights and public services. Workers in the EU are made to compete with each other, forcing Dutch workers into unemployment as cheap labour economies in southern and eastern Europe are enabled by a range of constructions to practice unfair competition. A vote for the SP on May 22nd will help in the resistance to such short-sighted capitalist competition, promote solidarity and give our citizens a voice in our economy, our wages, our pensions our social security and our public services.

- Neoliberal policies have thrown record numbers out of work. People should no longer be forced to pack their bags and set off for another member state to look for a job. The free movement of workers within the EU should not be unlimited; regulation is necessary in relation to structural forms of exploitation or serious disruption of the labour market. The extension of the right of free movement to workers from Romania and Bulgaria, effective from the beginning of this year, will only worsen exploitation. This decision must therefore be reversed.
- European Economic Governance with its emphasis on austerity should be abolished.
- We reject attempts by the European Commission to control also the member states' social policies. To prevent social dumping within the internal market, member states should be encouraged to recognise all of the rights contained in the 1996 European Social Charter, a Council of Europe agreement to which the EU should accede.
- Social rights must never be subordinated to the laws governing the internal market. Employers must respect rights recognised in the country in which they are operating and to the principle of equal pay for equal work – for indigenous and migrant workers – no exceptions should be allowed.
- Equal pay for equal work must be enforced. National labour inspectorates should not be seen as interfering with freedom of establishment of services, but a badly needed to prevent illegal practices. Cooperation between national labour inspectorates should be intensified and more data exchanged on abusive firms and their practices. Fraudulent self-employment should be properly defined and countered, and post box companies established to take advantage of low wages and poor social security tackled with vigour.
- Pensions remain and must continue to be a matter for national administrations over which the EU has no say.
- The government's agreement with the Commission that only those earning less than €34,678 per year can be considered for social housing must be revised. Member states should be able to decide for themselves who qualifies.

6. COMMON MARKET, CONSUMER PROTECTION AND PROMOTION OF SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES

European cooperation is important for the preservation of peace, the furtherance of prosperity and the protection of democracy and our citizens' social rights. A common market for capital, goods, services and labour can be a means to this, but as things stand the free market has become a sacred ambition. The common market has gone off the rails. Money, not people, is its principal concern. Small and medium-sized firms are being ruined by multinationals, while workers have lost all job security. A vote for the SP on May 22nd will help make freedom of movement within the EU into a useful tool, rather than a sacred ambition.

- The single European market has enabled big corporations to take advantage of economies of scale to the disadvantage of small firms who want to remain local or national. In ever more sectors, power is being concentrated on certain companies. European competition policy must be reformed to counter this, and not restricted to cases of clear abuse of market power.
- In recent years the EU has adopted legislation under which public services such as the post, public transport and energy utilities are being privatised. Brussels is even threatening to push the privatisation of drinking water. Such legislation must be reversed. Member states must be able to decide for themselves how to run their public services. The new rules on public procurement leave more space for governments to take criteria other than price into account when awarding contracts, involving for example social and environmental standards. These rules must be broadly interpreted to enable local, regional and national authorities to opt for sustainability.
- Not all firms want to be active outside the Netherlands. They should be able to count on a level playing field and active state support.
- Lobbying from major corporations means that many EU laws work in their favour. This imbalance must be addressed, by placing restrictions on lobbyists and establishing minimum standards in matters such as consumer rights. To protect consumers and smaller firms, unfair competition must be opposed.
- Major corporations are keen to see common rules and regulations throughout the EU, and this has led to a flood of new European laws. Yet harmonisation isn't always needed; minimum standards or mutual recognition of rules will often serve. All legislation should be subject to testing to ensure that it does not disadvantage smaller firms.
- EU policy has increasingly fallen prey to shareholders. Employees must also be given a say in their firms' decision-making and European law adapted accordingly.
- Larger firms should be obliged to include in their annual reports explanations of their social and environmental policies, employee relations, and how in their relationships with suppliers they contribute to respect for human rights and the fight against corruption.
- Consumer protection when making purchases via the Internet must be improved. Cyber-criminality must be actively combatted, so that people can make secure use of such services as internet banking. The privacy of the Internet-user must be guaranteed.

7. AGRICULTURE, NATURE AND FOOD QUALITY

Cooperation within Europe is sensible, in order to safeguard our food products, guarantee good, healthy eating, avoid dangerous animal diseases and respect animal welfare. The existing European Union leads, however, to unlimited increases in scale, shameless overfishing of the seas, neglect of animal welfare, scandalous international transport of livestock and reckless destruction of biodiversity.

Farmers must receive a fair price for their products and be able to earn a decent income. We want safe and sustainably produced food, in the production of which we truly respect the welfare of animals. Instead of sacrificing our environment to an unsustainably organised economy, we must ensure that generations to come can also live well and healthily. A vote for the SP on 22nd May will help ensure that our food is healthy, safe and sustainably produced.

- The agricultural sector should be less concerned with free trade and the world market, and directed more at food sovereignty. The food crisis and speculation around food prices demonstrate that free trade is risky for countries, including developing countries, which import a great deal of food. The WTO's free trade rules offer multinationals an unhealthy ascendancy in relation to local farmers. Food sovereignty must be the basic principle. Developing countries must not be forced to liberalise their food sectors, or to open their borders to foodstuffs produced under inferior environmental or animal welfare regulations. Patents on properties of plants and animals should not be permitted.
- European farm subsidies should be abolished and replaced with increased market regulation and payments which reward landscape management. Almost a third of the EU budget goes on agricultural subsidies, which often go directly to multinationals, and even royal households, with no real involvement in farming. Meanwhile, real farming families are leaving the land in droves. Quota systems such as that for dairy farmers must be improved and extended to other sectors. The legal position of farmers must be improved in order to enable them to counterbalance the buying power of supermarkets and food processors.
- The maintenance of the supply chain should be central to European agriculture. As things stand, we are seeing runaway industrialisation of agriculture and a race to have the lowest environmental and animal welfare standards. Instead of this, cooperation should aim at sustainability. The use of antibiotics must be sharply reduced.
- The Netherlands must improve its supervision of food safety and authorisation of new foodstuffs. This also applies to the EU and its European Food Safety Agency (EFSA). EFSA should be protected from influence from food industry lobbyists.
- Information on food packages must be reliable. We see no advantage to genetically modified crops. Patents on genetically modified organisms (GMOs) enrich multinationals to no social utility and carry risks.
- The Netherlands should work towards the formation of a European nature network aimed at biodiversity. European agreements can help improve protection of nature.

Member states should maintain the freedom to decide for themselves how to fulfil European objectives.

- The Netherlands should pursue a sustainable fisheries policy. The natural balance in the North Sea and other European seas must be restored, partly through the restriction of the catch to a sustainable level. Fishing must not be at the expense of the sea bed or species such as dolphins and seals . Buying up developing countries' fishing rights must be halted where it presents a threat to the country's fisheries sector or leads to overfishing.
- Animal welfare must be improved. This is in the interests of human beings as well as animals and the environment. Animal transports should be limited to 500 kms. Tests on animals should be kept to a minimum, and where alternatives exist these should be obligatory. All animal tests should only be approved where they are socially or medically relevant. Preventative injections should be preferred to the slaughter of healthy animals.

8. ENVIRONMENT

One thing is certain: environmental pollution does not stop at the border, so it's important to make agreements on environmental protection and public health.

Corporations are covering the whole of Europe with waste, standing in the way of a policy of avoiding waste production where possible and recycling and reusing what remains. Only via a less shortsighted manner of production can CO2 emissions be reduced by at least 50% by 2030.

- 8.1 The Netherlands must commit itself to cooperation in Europe to make possible an ambitious environmental policy, but must also reclaim the leading position when it comes to environmental issues. Given the differences in environmental problems and local circumstances amongst member states, Brussels should be careful about establishing detailed environmental rules which can make an effective national approach difficult.
- In the global discussion on climate policy, European countries have taken the lead. CO2 emissions must be reduced by at least 50% by 2030. European countries should take measures to adapt to the changes which the climate will bring. The Netherlands can set an example to the rest of the world.
- The European Emissions Trading System (ETS) must be thoroughly reformed, with at the very least a minimum price for emission rights, reduced every year to compensate investment in sustainable energy. No more emission rights should be available free of charge. Income from their sale should be invested in energy saving and sustainable energy.
- In order to reduce CO2 emissions following the principle of the 'polluter pays', we should not permit any exceptions within the EU for air- or sea transport. In order to counter any competitive disadvantage, duty should be levied on imports produced with polluting methods.
- Rules governing air pollution should be supplemented by limits on soot, the most polluting of substances contributing to atmospheric pollution. Existing norms for particulates should be tightened up.
- The criminal practice of waste dumping must be addressed via cooperation between environmental inspection services, police and customs. The principle should be that every country should, as far as is possible, process its own waste.
- The consumer products market should be made more sustainable by means of the tightening up of product requirements and improved energy performance. Energy performance should be based on use throughout a product's life cycle. Requirements must be adapted every year to take account of new technologies.
- Controls on good water management should be improved. Downstream countries such as the Netherlands are badly affected by discharges in upstream countries and member states must be obliged to cooperate around river basin areas. Coordination in the event of drought or flood must be improved.

9. ENERGY

Cooperation in Europe was once aimed at improving people's lives, but in the existing EU attention has been concentrated on short-term profits. This is short-sighted and dangerous, especially when it concerns energy. Stable, affordable energy provision is one of the fundamentals of a healthy economy. More efficient use of scarce energy reserves, greater employment of sustainable energy, a guarantee of security of supply, and reduction of CO2 emissions demand a well-considered policy directed at the general interest. We must stop the EU from making energy into a subject for profit-seeking.

- We must reduce energy use with energy performance standards for products and insulation requirements for buildings. These must be regularly adjusted to the state of technology, so that the industry is challenged to innovate. European ambitions are being thwarted by the power of the enormous Brussels lobby with car manufacturers and others having far too much influence.
- The Netherlands should join others in encouraging the development of sustainable energy sources such as wind and solar power. Within the terms of agreements with others, member states should have the right to decide for themselves how to generate energy. The use of biomass and biofuels is only acceptable if it is not at the expense of food production, and does not encourage deforestation or carry negative effects for the local population in developing countries. Nuclear fusion is a technology for the long term. The risk from waste means that nuclear power and shale gas are not acceptable. Carbon capture is equally unacceptable as things stand as it is neither cost-effective nor reliable. Safety regulations for existing European nuclear power stations should be much stricter.
- European countries must work together to deploy sustainable energy sources, and to this end we should be promoting cross-border links between national grids. EU legislation should be adjusted to promote the most sustainable production methods and reduce the risks of breakdown of the grid. The Netherlands should work with neighbours to establish a regional utility to manage heavy high voltage supplies and gas pipes, so that the growth of sustainable energy, principally offshore North Sea wind parks, can be encouraged.
- We oppose marketisation of trade in energy and support cooperation. The EU agreement to split management of the grid from the energy suppliers has only been implemented by the Netherlands and can and should be reversed.
- The use of biomass as a fuel should be as far as possible limited. The order of priority for the use of high quality products should be as follows: 1. Food for people 2. Feed for animals 3. Compost 4. 'Green' building materials 5. Fuel.

10. ASYLUM AND MIGRATION

The opening of our labour market to Bulgarian and Romanian jobseekers is a colossal blunder. It has made people from these countries into cheap merchandise for ruthless employers and led to unfair competition on an already unbalanced labour market, as previously happened with Polish workers, also as a result of a Brussels diktat. Free movement of workers within the European Union can only work without provoking massive problems if conditions in the different countries of Europe become more alike. As long as that is not the case, the unlimited opening of internal borders is asking for abuses to occur.

Europe is for many people from other continents a haven of refuge, but increasingly resembles an unassailable fortress. People from other parts of the world are dying in great numbers at the EU's external borders or barely surviving in appalling circumstances. Sound agreements at the European level are needed if we are to prevent humanitarian disasters and guarantee the provision of emergency relief worthy of the name. We will promote fair trade and effective development cooperation, and end the supply of arms and support to abusive regimes. A vote for the SP on May 22nd will help combat unfair competition over labour conditions and exploitation of workers within the European Union, underwriting in addition an effective agreement on humane conditions for refugees and support for a fairer world.

- The existing asylum system, under which the country in which the asylum seeker first arrives in the EU has responsibility for dealing with his or her asylum request, is coming apart at the seams. Countries with long external borders are faced with having to deal with large numbers of asylum seekers and are neither capable of nor willing to offer effective protection to the refugees in their midst. For this reason it is crucial that European centres are established, close to the external borders, where asylum-seekers can await the results of their application. Refugees and asylum-seekers with complicated applications which require more time could then be fairly divided between member states.
- The starting point for a refugee policy should be that as many as possible are given emergency relief and accommodation in their own region. The Netherlands should join other countries in Europe in giving aid to countries which provide such relief.
- Where a humanitarian disaster has occurred, agreements should be made between the member states on the receipt of displaced persons who have managed to reach Europe, regarding their distribution between member states. This could prevent one country having to accommodate disproportionately more people than others. In the event of a major humanitarian disaster (such as Syria), where the region cannot possibly accommodate all groups of refugees, Europe should accept more refugees and agree on the division of emergency relief and accommodation between the member states.
- Trafficking in human beings must be tackled more effectively. This concerns not only exploitation in prostitution, but also exploitation in the economy as a whole. Victims of trafficking have a right to admission on humanitarian grounds if they cooperate in the pursuit of the traffickers involved, or if they cannot so cooperate as a result of psychological or medical problems. The member states should work closely together in order to track down traffickers in people, which is by definition a transfrontier task. People aren't commodities.

- Cooperation in the matter of border policing must not lead to a Fortress Europe. Common surveillance of the Mediterranean Sea (Frontex, Eurosur) must be aimed at reducing the number of deaths during the crossing from Africa to Europe. Those who do make the crossing must be able to apply for asylum in Europe.
- The brain drain from developing countries must be countered. Attracting migrants with sound qualifications to Europe is undesirable, widening as it does the gap between European countries and their countries of origin. Instead, member states should direct their policies at increasing the prosperity of the countries of origin, for example by exchange of know-how and technology.
- The position of people who remain in Europe unlawfully is often degrading. Member states must ensure that people without residency permits are provided with basics such as accommodation, clothing and food. Making such unlawful presence into a criminal offence, as has been brought in in the Netherlands, only makes the situation worse and must be repealed. It is important that people residing unlawfully are returned to their countries of origin, provided that these will accept them. If they have cooperated in their return, but the country in question refuses to accept them, they should in the end be given the right to remain. Detention of asylum seekers is admissible only as a last resort, and should never be employed where there is no immediate prospect of their being able to leave. Countries in Europe should work together to exert pressure on countries of origin to accept their citizens' return where these have remained unlawfully in one of the member states. Pressure on our neighbours in Europe to improve their asylum and migration policies should be stepped up, so that on the one hand refugees can receive protection nearer to their homeland and on the other unlawful immigration to Europe can be countered.

11. CRIME, SECURITY AND PRIVACY

Criminal gangs were amongst the first to benefit from the removal of borders within the European Union, and little by little the lines between the criminal underworld and the political overworld have become blurred. We support European cooperation to address criminality, which demands more domestic powers to catch and punish criminals. In addition, surveillance of cross-border transactions must be improved and where necessary restricted.

Allowing Brussels to interfere with our national criminal law is another matter. A European Office of Public Prosecutions, which Brussels is trying to force on us, is certainly not needed, and neither is an EU arrest warrant designed to limit the protection of rights and the privacy of our own citizens. A vote for the SP on 22nd May will help to make life more difficult for criminals and their friends in the overworld. We will defend our right to rule our own affairs when it comes to criminal law, security and privacy.

- Removal of border controls has made life easier for criminals and necessitates effective cooperation within Europe. Yet the EU goes much too far when it comes to the collation and preservation of personal data, and their exchange with countries outside Europe. Such practices as opening to the police of the fingerprint databank for asylum-seekers must be ended.
- Strict conditions must govern the preservation and exchange of information for police investigations and legal procedures. Datamining must be abolished, and clear legislation should protect privacy. Very strict conditions must be imposed in relation to exchange of information with countries outside Europe. The SWIFT agreement with the US, which opens European bank accounts to the US security services, must be terminated. Internet neutrality must be guaranteed and cyber-crime combatted.
- The European Arrest Warrant (EAW) is not working well. There are too few guarantees of the rights of suspects transferred to another member state, and the EAW is too often employed for trivial offences. Countries should have the right to subject requests for extradition to examination to determine whether the suspect will be given a fair trial.
- Judicial cooperation should be based on common agreements. There remain major differences among legal systems making reliance on mutual trust inappropriate. Harmonisation of criminal law practices should take place only where this would clearly add value, such as in the case of serious cross-border offences. In general the EU should stay out of criminal law, which is strongly linked to national traditions. In matters such as abortion and euthanasia harmonisation is undesirable.
- The proposed establishment of a European Public Prosecutors' Office is a further step towards dismantling national sovereignty and must be rejected.
- Member states no longer fulfilling EU membership criteria must be called to account and action taken where the rule of law is at risk. Intense European cooperation demands that the public and companies throughout the EU can count on a constitutional state free of corruption, discrimination and arbitrary actions by government. It is in the first instance the people of the country in question who must call their government to order. In the case of longstanding abuses, however, other countries should, in cooperation with the Council of Europe, censure and in extreme cases expel the member state concerned.

- All member states must guarantee equal rights for everyone. Equal treatment and equal pay for men and women, and protection against discrimination for gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgenders must be guaranteed. Laws forbidding distribution of information about homosexuality have no place on EU member states. The anti-discrimination directive must at last be adopted, and the rights of same-sex partners who move to another member state must be recognised.
- The Netherlands must have the freedom to legalise soft drugs without interference from the EU. The legalisation of soft drugs would have many advantages in comparison to their banning. This decision must be the Netherlands' to make.

12. TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT

Pressure from the European Union to make everything everywhere into a market is leading to grotesque levels of meddling in our traffic regulations and how we organise our public transport. Where we lay roads and what buses, trams and trains run in our own country are ours alone to decide.

European cooperation for cleaner international road transport, faster and better international train transport and less polluting air transport are to be encouraged, but with what we can better manage ourselves Brussels should not interfere. We will no longer put up with a situation in which Dutch truck drivers are forced to stand by powerless as their jobs are taken by underpaid and exploited drivers from eastern Europe. A vote for the SP on 22nd May will help us to regulate our own traffic and run our own transport without EU interference.

- It is unacceptable that truck drivers continue to be the victims of transport firms' illegal practices which will try anything to force down their costs at the expense of their drivers. We must put an immediate end to the practices of bogus employment bureaux and postbox companies. Stricter controls must ensure that companies adhere to laws governing working conditions and that they offer equal pay for equal work. Cabotage rules must not be relaxed, and stricter controls must be applied to the issuing of the Euro permit.
- The EU sees transport within Europe first and foremost as a market. We, on the other hand, want to see accessible and sustainable cross-border public transport in order to reduce private car use and thus pollution. Countries should be free to introduce demands on road traffic which go beyond EU norms on such matters as noise and environmental nuisance. The EU could encourage trans-border public transport not via marketisation but by restoring small-scale international regional public transport, which in many areas is disappearing.
- Brussels must stay out of our public transport. In the past the SP has succeeded in the European Parliament in preventing the passage of a law making it compulsory to put public transport in major urban areas out to tender. We reject plans – under the 4th Rail Package – to expose domestic passenger rail transport to European competition and chop our rail system into pieces.
- In order to protect the environment, high-speed trains must offer a real alternative to air transport. Investing in a high speed train network would make the majority of intra-European flights redundant. Tax exemption for kerosene, the fuel for aircraft, must be abolished.
- The European air transport sector must be clean, safe and reliable. The sector must participate in the Emissions Trading System. Passengers' rights must be better enforced: in cases of delay or cancellation, they should be able to count on timely information and the provision of food, drink and, where necessary, hotel accommodation.
- Investments in Trans-European Networks (TENs) should be aimed not at the growth of road transport but at environmental improvements and unblocking bottlenecks. More freight transport by water and rail could reduce road transport, as could reducing the unnecessary transport of raw materials and semi-manufactured goods during the production process.

- We support cooperation with other countries in order to maintain the navigability of rivers and canals. Older inland waterways vessels should be exempt from new EU standards which make no contribution to sustainability.
- Ports in Europe are being played off against each other by big shippers who force them to compete to provide facilities for ever bigger ships. It would be better to strive for an even division of employment and of port capacity between the various European port regions than conduct a deadly competitive struggle. This would also make possible more efficient and sustainable transport planning.

13. HEALTH AND EDUCATION

Health care is not a market and school is not a product. Yet even here we have to put up increasingly with Brussels' meddling attempts to make our health care into a European market and hand schools to suppliers of the product 'education'. Under pressure from Brussels successive governments have allowed marketisation and increases in scale to get out of hand.

This is extremely bad for the quality and accessibility of our health and accessibility of our health care and education. A vote for the SP on 22nd May will help to draw the line on this, to guarantee good quality and accessibility, and fend off Brussels' meddling.

- How our national system of health care and health insurance is organised and financed is a national issue. We reject attempts to make these into a market and subject them to EU competition law.
- We should work together in Europe to enable everyone in other EU countries to be able to call on medical care, but patients should not be obliged to go abroad for treatment. Patient mobility should not lead to an undermining of the Netherlands' health care system.
- Health care must be accessible to rich and poor alike. Both within and outside Europe well-trained health workers are leaving poor countries for wealthier lands.
- Solidarity with older people must be guaranteed within the health care system. Restricting access to health care and other examples of deterioration of the position of seniors as a result of EU rules is not acceptable.
- Much research into cures for certain diseases is of no commercial interest either because they are too rare or occur principally in developing countries. The pharmaceutical industry should be obliged to contribute to a fund coordinated at European level to finance this research, the independence of which must be guaranteed. The EU patents directive should be amended to improve accessibility to medicines in developing countries.
- Direct advertising of medicinal products to patients by pharmaceutical companies must not be authorised. The pharmaceutical industry lobby is too powerful and insufficiently transparent. Conflicts of interest between European policy makers and the pharmaceutical industry must be avoided and where they occur, dealt with. Industry influence via sponsored patients' groups must be restricted. For reasons of safety, member states must be allowed to refuse authorisation to prescription drugs which are allowed by the EU, or to impose additional demands.
- In the event of an epidemic, EU member states must work closely together, coordinating the provision of information as well as adding to their knowledge of how to prevent or tackle epidemics. Cooperation with the World Health Organisation is essential.
- Questions involving medical ethics, such as abortion and euthanasia, must remain under national control.
- In order to improve protection for patients, an EU blacklist of dysfunctional doctors and other health care professionals should be constructed, with national authorities retaining the right to decide who should be on the list.
- Education must remain a national responsibility. Brussels sees education as a market, and as a way to prepare young people for the labour market and thus enhance

Europe's competitiveness. We reject EU moves to encourage competition between schools and universities.

- The EU can make a useful contribution to cooperation in the exchange of knowledge and expertise, researchers and students. Degrees should be recognised everywhere, provided this does not have any detrimental effect on their quality. Member states should have the right to impose restrictions in connection with specific professions.

14. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND HUMAN RIGHT

The existing European Union is developing into a world power, which competes with the United States and China, dominates other countries and prioritises its own interests. Countries with little power and often major internal problems are made the victims of European bullying when it comes to trade agreements. Within the EU, pressure is growing for it to become in addition a military superpower with a unified army able to intervene anywhere in the world.

When countries within Europe hold talks with other countries and regions, international solidarity, fair trade and respect for human rights should be at the top of the agenda. The EU must not become a menacing world power, but a region with free citizens enjoying democratic and social rights and working together for peace and prosperity. A vote for the SP on May 22nd will help ensure that Europe does not enrich itself on the backs of the rest of the world but instead strives for fair trade, fair shares and a safe world.

- In the next five years the EU must not be further enlarged. The candidate member states are not ready, and the EU must, before any expansion, put its own house in order.
- If countries which wish to cooperate with the EU are guilty of human rights abuses, this must not be without consequences. That's why we want to see the suspension of the Association Agreement with Israel, and human rights playing a greater role when it comes to cooperation with such countries as Russia, China and the US.
- The EU must not become a military alliance. The solidarity clause in the Lisbon Treaty, which obliges member states to assist each other in emergencies, must not be interpreted as if it were the same as NATO's Article 5. Interventions by member states in foreign countries must only be permitted where they have a UN mandate and if the action is proportional and effective.
- European armies should cooperate and via the European Defence Agency move towards getting rid of common materiel. This creeping development towards a European army must be halted. The EU must not subsidise the armaments industry. We are against the development of armed drones. The European Space Agency must restrict itself to its original goal of cooperation in space research and technologies for peaceful ends.
- The Netherlands should work towards a tightening up of the rules governing the export of armaments. Arms should not be exported to countries abusing human rights and the Netherlands must be able to control their export from or passage through its own territory.
- Europe must be free of nuclear weapons.
- The Netherlands should work to achieve fair trade. Trade can be an important source of aid, helping countries to build prosperity. Free trade has a number of major drawbacks, including its damaging effect on the environment, the needless movement of goods and making corporations more powerful than states.
- We oppose the establishment of a common market with the US, Canada and Japan. This would be at the cost of social rights and public services. It would make it increasingly more difficult for small firms to hold their own against multinational

corporations. Trade and investment treaties now include dispute settlement mechanisms enabling corporations to sue states for damages in the event of lost income as a result of environmental or social regulations. This threatens the ability of governments to apply their own policies. Damage compensation would be at the expense of the taxpayer. We want to see this sort of dispute settlement abolished.

- The EU must cease its attempts to gain tariff-free access to developing countries and unfair trade agreements must be suspended. Such treaties undermine developing countries' agricultural sectors and food security making them even more dependent on the purchase of food on the world market, while state revenue falls as a result of the loss of income from tariffs.
- All countries in Europe with the exception of Belarus and the Vatican are members of the Council of Europe and must adhere to the European Convention on Human Rights. The EU should ratify this treaty in its own right, respect decisions of the European Court of Human Rights and where necessary adapt EU legislation accordingly.
- The Netherlands should re-establish its leading position in development cooperation. We will work together with other countries in Europe if that has clear benefits beyond what can be achieved alone or via multilateral organisations.
- Developing countries must be able to protect their agricultural markets. State support for these is denied, while the EU and US continue what for them is a longstanding practice.
- European countries must stop dumping farm products in developing countries. Dumping waste in developing countries must be dealt with severely.
- The EU should support international organisations which function well instead of trying to take over their tasks. The need to cooperate in this way applies particularly in the cases of the UN and the Council of Europe.